

*R Habersham Esq
the 8th day of April 1864*

GIDEON'S WATER-LAPPERS.

W. Elliott

A SERMON

Preached in Christ Church, Savannah,

On Friday, the 8th day of April, 1864.

THE DAY SET APART BY THE

CONGRESS OF THE CONFEDERATE STATES,

AS A DAY OF

HUMILIATION, FASTING AND PRAYER.

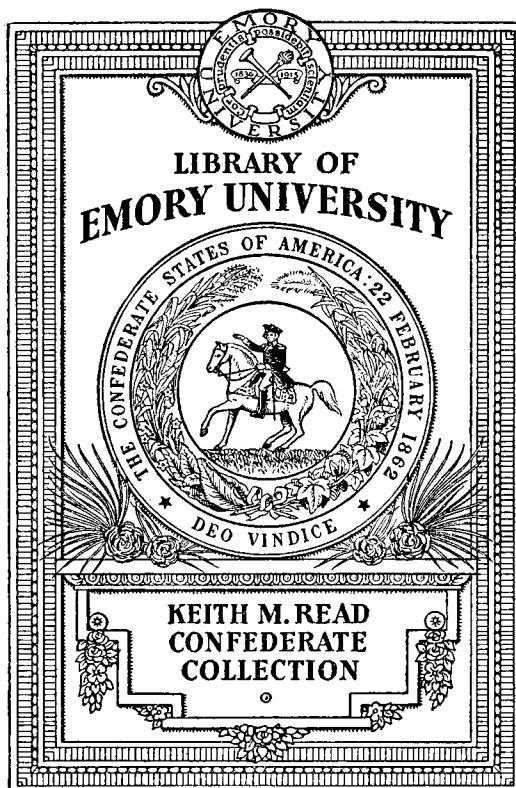
[PUBLISHED BY REQUEST.]

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Macon, Ga.

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To the Clergy of the Diocese of Georgia.

WHEREAS, the Senate and House of Representatives of the Confederate States of America signified, during the late session of Congress, their desire that Friday, the 8th day of April, should be recommended to the people of the said States as a day of Humiliation, Fasting and Prayer, and

WHEREAS, in pursuance of that desire, the President of the Confederate States has issued his Proclamation, setting apart that day for the purposes of religious observance, and inviting the people of the Confederate States to repair to their several places of public worship and beseech Almighty God "to preside over our public counsels and to inspire our armies and leaders with wisdom, courage and perseverance; and so to manifest himself in the greatness of his goodness, and in the majesty of his power, that we may secure the blessings of an honorable peace and of free government, and that we, as a people, may ascribe all to the honor and Glory of his name."

Now, therefore, I, STEPHEN ELLIOTT, Bishop of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the Diocese of Georgia, do direct the Clergy of said Diocese to call the attention of their respective congregations to this request on the part of our Congress and President, urging upon them its observance in the true spirit of Humiliation and Prayer.

And I do further direct the Clergy of the Diocese to assemble their congregations upon the day appointed for the Fast and to use the following service:

Morning Prayer as usual to the Psalter.

Psalms for the Day—94th, 144th, 146th.

First Lesson—Lamentations: ch. III, v. 37, to end.

Second Lesson—Romans: ch. 13.

Use the whole Litany.

Before the General Thanksgiving introduce the Confession which precedes the Epistle for Ash Wednesday and the following Prayers:

The Prayer "In time of War and Tumults," introducing after the words "from the hands of our enemies," the words "abate their pride, assuage their malice, confound their devices."

O Almighty God and Heavenly Father, who hast taught us in thy Holy Word, that, if our ways please thee, thou wilt make even our enemies to be at peace with us, create and make in us new and contrite hearts, that we worthily lamenting our sins and acknowledging our wretchedness, may obtain of thee, the God of all mercy, such remission and forgiveness, such sanctification and divine favor, as that thou mayest grant unto us independence and peace. We acknowledge it thy goodness that we have not been delivered over as a prey unto our enemies, and we beseech thee still to continue such thy mercies towards us, that all the world may know that Thou art our Saviour and mighty Deliverer, through Jesus Christ our Lord: AMEN.

STEPHEN ELLIOTT,
Bishop of the Diocese of Georgia.

Savannah, March 29, 1864.

A Sermon.

JUDGES: CHAP. VII, vv. 1—9.

1. *Then Jerubbaal (who is Gideon,) and all the people that were with him, rose up early, and pitched beside the well of Harod: so that the host of the Midianites were on the north side of them, by the hill of Moreh, in the valley.*

2. *And the Lord said unto Gideon, The people that are with thee are too many for me to give the Midianites into their hands, lest Israel vaunt themselves against me, saying, Mine own hand hath saved me.*

3. *Now, therefore, go to, proclaim in the ears of the people, saying, Whosoever is fearful and afraid, let him return, and depart early from Mount Gilead: and there returned of the people twenty and two thousand, and there remained ten thousand.*

4. *And the Lord said unto Gideon, The people are yet too many; bring them down unto the water, and I will try them for thee there: and it shall be, that of whom I say unto thee, This shall go with thee, the same shall go with thee; and of whomsoever I say unto thee, This shall not go with thee, the same shall not go.*

5. *So he brought down the people unto the water: and the Lord said unto Gideon, Every one that lappeth of the water with his tongue, as a dog lappeth, him shalt thou set by himself; likewise every one that boweth down upon his knees to drink.*

6. *And the number of them that lapped, putting their hand to their mouth, were three hundred men: but all the rest of the people bowed down upon their knees to drink water.*

7. *And the Lord said unto Gideon, By the three hundred men that lapped will I save you, and deliver the Midianites into thine hand: and let all the other people go every man unto his place.*

8. *So the people took victuals in their hand, and their trumpets: and he sent all the rest of Israel, every man unto his tent, and retained those three hundred men. And the host of Midian was beneath him in the valley.*

The fourth campaign of our struggle for deliverance from the usurping tyranny of the United States is about to open upon a scale of grandeur equal to any which has preceded it. Foreseeing the fierceness of this last great effort of that nearly exhausted power, our Congress has called upon us to meet it, not only in the spirit of united and determined resistance, but with humiliation before God and earnest prayer for his help and guidance. We have so often seen the gathering fury of our enemies dispersed by God in answer to our humble prayers—

scattered and rolled back in blood and confusion—that we come to-day boldly to the throne of Grace, firmly believing that our prayers, and supplications, if offered with pure hearts and clean lips, will return to us laden with blessings from the Lord of Hosts, the God of the armies of Israel.

Upon such a critical occasion, it becomes us to prelude our solemn fast, and the observations which arise naturally out of it, with a song of thanksgiving for the favours which have crowned us in the past, and for the position which we yet maintain in the face of our enemies and of the world. “It is of God’s mercies that we have not been consumed,” for we have assuredly had everything against us; numbers overwhelming, hate bitter and cruel, resources without stint, the command by our enemies of the ocean and the rivers, the ear of the world shut to us, the cry put upon us of slavery and barbarism. With all these things have we been contending for three weary years, through storm and sunshine, in cold and hunger and nakedness, creating as we fought, weeping while we labored, reaping courage and endurance from the fields sown with the blood of our children, and yet through the mercy of God, we stand this day unconquered and defiant, looking to final success with as full assurance, as upon the day when we threw down the gauntlet under the walls of the ocean girdled Sumter. Army after army has been hurled back from its desperate advances, as the iron bound coast hurls back the waves, broken into foam, which rolled up so fiercely and ominously to the assault. General after General has met his doom at our hands, not in bloody graves, but in discomfiture and disgrace, and they have passed in gloomy procession, discrowned and unwreathed, from off the stage of action. Alas! that one of Southern birth should have led that band of smitten heroes, and that the laurels of the great Captain of two wars should have been withered in such a cause! Just retribution! that the hand which lifted itself against its mother, should have lost its cunning as it struck the blow.

Such is our cause for thanksgiving, when considered in a general way and in its relations to the past. But we shall find

it very much augmented, if instead of gazing gloomily into the future, we should look calmly around us at the perplexed scene amid which we stand. Our great business undoubtedly is, "not to trouble ourselves about what lies dimly at a distance, but to do what lies clearly at hand." It is unbecoming a christian people to be throwing crude fears and murmurings into the face of God, when we should rather be praising and blessing his Holy name for his great goodness and loving kindness towards us. It may be well that our enemies should despise our strength and undervalue our resources, so that when the truth bursts upon them, the reaction may be more overwhelming, but it is not well that we should underrate our own condition and be despondent when there is no legitimate occasion for it. We must not permit the serpents which are to crush us and our children to creep out of our own altars.

If we recall the brief history of our Government, we shall perceive that, with the exception of Louisiana, the enemy has made no conquests of moment in any of the seven States which composed the original Confederacy. After three years of gigantic warfare our foes have succeeded in planting their hostile footsteps only upon the shores and coasts of the States which first defied them. The ocean line of South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, and Texas, and the river line of Mississippi and Tennessee, just where their unopposed navies could reach, comprise all their conquests, and those gained at immense expense, held within the narrowest limits and by a most precarious tenure. For two years have they fitted out armament after armament, provided with everything which mechanical ingenuity could devise and a limitless issue of paper money could purchase, and they have not advanced one foot within our territories. They tried to advance at Charleston and were whipped at Secessionville. They attempted it from Port Royal and were whipped at Pocotaligo. In that direction they stand precisely where Dupont left them in November, sixty-one. Again they were bold to move inward from Jacksonville and were shamefully defeated at Ocean pond. They made a like effort from Pascagoula and were forced to beat a hasty retreat to their vessels. Their last grand advance from Vicksburg has

ended, like all the rest, in discomfiture and disaster. All they have really gained in the three years of the war, has been gained in Virginia, Tennessee and Arkansas ; States which joined their fortunes with the Confederacy only after the war had commenced. Up to this moment, therefore, the armies of the United States have been only regaining territory which they lost since the struggle began in the harbor of Charleston ! This is worthy of notice and teaches us how idle is any idea of subjugation. Our remaining territory is, at least, three times the area of France, and nearly one half the area of that overshadowing power, Russia in Europe. Was that Empire in any real danger when Napoleon, with the greatest army of modern times, had reached and captured its ancient capital ? In none at all ! His own danger it was that began when he obtained that apparently grand position ! With a distant base, almost interminable space stretching away around him, in the midst of an intensely hostile people, with cavalry swarming upon his lines of communication, his defeat was certain even before the cold descended upon his armies. And will not this be the position of every army attempting to advance within our borders, if we are only true to ourselves ? Was France in any danger of subjugation when Marlborough and Eugene broke through her frontier fortresses, and the bloody battles of Oudenarde and Malplaquet had consigned to the dust her best and most veteran warriors ? Or should we consider that Empire in any serious peril now, if England was to ravage her coasts and take possession of her harbors ? During the greater part of the wars of Napoleon, France was under as strict blockade as we are now. Why then should we croak and tremble because of a few temporary reverses, which can give our enemies no permanent possession of the country and which must be maintained, if maintained at all, at a cost past all calculation.

But it may be said, this is a one-sided view of the case. The enemy has been steadily gaining upon us, and every year finds him in possession of some new territory which weakens us and gives him confidence of final success. Admitting this to be so, we must remember the cost at which these advantages,

such as they are, have been achieved. Already has the United States government accumulated a permanent debt of Fifteen hundred millions of Dollars, besides a floating debt, which it dares not look in the face, of several hundred millions more, amounting together to one half the national debt of Great Britain ; already have their military drafts exceeded a million of men, some hundreds of thousands of whom have been disabled, or whose bones lie scattered over the debateable ground of Virginia and Tennessee ; and with no better result than having regained, as I said just now, a portion of the Territory which came to us from them after the war commenced. Can they at this rate continue this expenditure long enough to finish their work ? Will the people of the United States consent to be maimed and slaughtered through an indefinite series of years for the annual honor of marching from Washington to the Rappahannock, and from Nashville to Chattanooga ? Impossible ! for it would require, according to their present rate of progress, at least two more Presidential terms and the accumulation of a debt unheard of in the annals of the world, before they could overrun our territory, even supposing that they should meet no such crushing defeats as they have encountered in the past. Truly their prospect is not a bright one, even when admitting their own pretensions.

But it will be said that our resources in materials of war, in food and in men are all failing us, and that we cannot maintain the struggle for a much longer period. This is a popular error, uttered without proper consideration and without those limitations which are necessary to make it true. In materials of war, strictly so called, we were never so well off as we are at this moment. I remember well, when in the early days of this conflict, there was not powder enough in the Confederacy to fight another battle, and now we have it in rich abundance. I remember well, when in this very military district, threatened too at the time with a serious attack, the fortuitous arrival of a foreign vessel alone enabled us to arm the troops which had assembled for our defence. And now who hears of any deficiency of arms ? In the first years of the conflict our supply of both heavy and light artillery was

scanty, and for the most part, of very inferior quality, and now we have quite an abundance of that arm of the service, equal in most respects to the armaments of our adversary. Again and again have our troops been reduced, in the past, to great extremities for proper and sufficient clothing and equipments; they are now, according to the most authentic accounts, well ordered in these respects and sufficiently provided with at least the necessities of a camp life. When we first grappled with our enemy, their mechanical superiority was what we had most to dread; now our workshops, our armories, our powder mills, our mineral bureaus, our foundries, which have sprung up with wonderful skill and energy, can compare in quality, if not in number, with the best which our foes can boast. If we turn to the question of food, my honest opinion is that the condition of the currency has had much more to do with the scarcity of provisions than any actual deficiency of the supply. The food is in the country, and unless God sends upon us the curse of a special famine, will always be in the country, in quantity sufficient for all the purposes of life for both the people and the army, PROVIDED the government will furnish a currency having value and stability, and will turn its attention in earnest to the question of transportation. This is, I freely admit, our weakest point, but putting it at the worst, we have not yet encountered any such difficulties as many nations, fighting successfully for independence, have safely passed through. What is very remarkable upon this point, is the striking fact that the complaint about food has never yet come from the troops. Although these gallant men have often suffered from coarse and insufficient rations, they have suffered in silence, satisfied to believe that the Government was doing all that it could for their comfort. The cry of scarcity has come especially from those who have desired to obtain the very highest prices for what they possessed, and it has been echoed by others, who have been solicitous to make the war unpopular, and thus bring it to a close through reconstruction or submission. I have no doubt that our Commissaries have had sore trouble to meet the demands of our armies, but provisions will hide when money

is valueless, and fear of the guillotine could not force the assignats of France down the throats of the farmers. How quickly all that was remedied, when Buonaparte rose to the head of affairs! He found the troops of revolutionary France very much in the condition in which ours have been at times, poorly fed, poorly clad, poorly equipped; nay he conducted the glorious campaign of Italy with soldiers in worse condition than ours have ever been; but the magic of his administrative capacity very soon brought order out of chaos, and plenty out of scarceness. Let us hope that the intrepid firmness of our late Congress, to whose acts too much praise cannot be given, may enable our administration to produce in time the like wholesome results. Those acts may have special faults and glaring deficiencies, but they have, I think, struck fairly at the root of the mischiefs which have been cursing the land, and while their errors can be easily corrected by subsequent legislation, the great principles of political science which underlie them, of present and ample taxation, of a sound and permanent currency, of personal obligation upon every man, of military age, to take up arms for his country, of entrusting adequate power to the hands of our rulers, will sink deeply into the hearts of the people and will ultimately lead us on to independence and greatness.

The rapid changes which have been made by our Government in the ages of our conscripts, have led many to believe that our armies cannot be long kept up to their proper standard of numbers. But this position depends for its truth upon something else than a mere naked arithmetical calculation. Our proper standard of numbers is not any given amount, but is the proportion which those numbers bear to the armies that can be brought into the field against us, and the quality of the troops which we shall be called upon to meet in battle. Weighing the question of men in this point of view, there is very little to make us uneasy, for not only is the proportion of our armies to those of the enemy greater now in actual numbers than it has ever been before, but this proportion is largely increased in our favor by the ever lengthening line of their interior communications, which of course largely dimin-

ishes the number which they can actually lead into battle. Napoleon invaded Austria and fought the battle of Austerlitz with eighty thousand men, but he did not venture to move upon Russia, although the laurels of a hundred victories wreathed his brow and made him almost invincible, with less than six hundred thousand men, not because of the comparative strength of the two empires, but because of the respective distances of the fields of operation. And so with our enemies. As they advance into our interior, so many troops are absolutely required to keep up lines of communication, to guard bridges and depots, to garrison important positions, that their armies might increase and ours diminish in actual numbers, and yet the proportion be maintained, which has hitherto enabled us to repulse them, or at least hold them in check. But our deficiency in men is not such as has been supposed. We mournfully count those who have fallen in battle and by disease, but forget those who are attaining maturity throughout the bounds of the Confederacy. It is impossible, for lack of any correct statistical tables, to reduce this matter to actual certainty, but if we take a single city, our own for example, I will venture to assert that more youths have come of military age during the three years of the war, than can be named of citizens who have been killed or disabled in the struggle. And while what is true of us, may not be strictly true of all other places, it may be considered as a somewhat approximate calculation, and may hinder us from supposing that we are decreasing from the chances of war, without any corresponding increase from natural causes.

One of the great mistakes which our enemies have made throughout this war, has been in supposing that mere numbers and material power were to decide this conflict—that right was nothing—that moral power was nothing—that the defence of a great trust was nothing—that the maintenance of a mighty principle was nothing. How grandly Carlyle strikes down this wretched materialism when he says, “One man that has a higher wisdom, a hitherto unknown spiritual truth in him is stronger, not than ten men that have it not, or than ten thousand, but than all men that have it not; and stands

among them with a quite ethereal angelic power, as with a sword out of Heaven's own armory, sky-tempered, which no buckler, and no tower of brass will finally withstand." And so with a cause which has in it all the inspiration of a great moral truth. Its success can never be measured by the mere numbers who defend it. It has in itself a spirit which can never be crushed—which, like Antæus, receives new life every time it is struck to the earth—which rises above all mere human calculations, and fetches power from Heaven—"ethereal angelic power"—and becomes gigantic in its efforts. Such a spirit as this has just flamed out from the masses of our armies, and has darted, like an electric spark, from man to man, until with an harmony grand in its self devotion, sublime in its simplicity, they have bound themselves to the horns of the altar, a sacrifice to their country and their God. Such men become irresistible, not because of their numbers, but from the holiness of their cause and the enthusiasm of their temper. Their strokes are like Rinaldo's—

" More deaths than blows he deals, yet momently
" His falchion smites ; and as the angry snake
" Seems in its single tongue to vibrate three
" With such a fearful swiftness does it shake ;
" So in dismay these charged barbarians take
" The single sword, which furiously the knight
" Whirls round, for three.

TASSO. IER. DEL.

" Number in armies," says Lord Bacon, " imputeth not much, where the people are of weak courage, for as Virgil saith, 'It never troubles the wolf, how many the sheep be.'" Nor by this quotation would I deprecate the courage of our adversaries, could I believe that their forces were made up of the native blood of the North and of the West, or if they were fighting in a like sacred cause, the defence of their social institutions, their homes and their firesides. The battle fields of the revolution would disprove so rash an assertion. Bunker Hill, and Saratoga, and Princeton would rise to every man's memory and vindicate the ancient fame of the Republic. But the true blood of the North and of the West has been gradually withdrawing itself from the conflict, and that govern-

ment is now carrying on the war very much by mercenaries and negroes. "As for mercenary forces," says the same great thinker, from whom I quoted just now, "all examples show that whatsoever estate or prince doth rest upon them, he may spread his feathers for a time, but he will mew them soon after." No man will quail, I trust, before any number of negroes. They may be mustered in to swell the numbers of our adversary, and to make false impressions abroad, but they can never be depended upon, and like the elephants of the Eastern wars, will be as apt to trample down their friends as their enemies. They are to be pitied, not feared, and I trust that wherever mercy can be shown them with justice to ourselves it will be extended to them. Their sin is, in most cases, one of delusion, and those who seduced them and now lead them, are the proper objects of vengeance, and not their ignorant and silly victims.

In addition to these reasons for a renewed hope and a cheerful future, God appears to have once more lifted up the light of his countenance upon us. I took occasion, in August last, in preaching to you upon that the gloomiest of all our days of humiliation, to speak of the unaccountable depression which was weighing down the spirits of all the people and of our powerlessness to lift it thence. "It must be lifted from our hearts," was my language upon that occasion, "where it rests like a weight of lead, by the hand of the Lord, which placed it there." We feel this day, that it has been lifted from us, and, as I truly believe, by the hand of that Lord. He has roused us, by his own spirit, from our supineness and faithlessness. He has rekindled the ardor of the past. Our battle flag has been advanced in full faith of his good will, and it moves forward in the van of our armies, flashing in the eyes of our enemies, our sacred motto, "Deo Vindice." Instead of opening this most critical campaign depressed, disheartened, embarrassed, we march to its encounter with the prestige of victories, not so brilliant as some which have preceded them, but most important, because of the effect which they have produced upon our armies, and the tone which they have imparted to the country. May these victories soon

swell into triumphs which shall force back upon their own soil the forces of our adversaries, and convince them that negotiation is safer than war, and a manly confession of wrong more honorable than a persistence in cruelty and oppression.

Why then this day of solemn humiliation, fasting and prayer? What occasion for calling upon a people in such spirit and temper to kneel before the throne of Grace and ask for mercy and forgiveness? Occasion enough! when we remember what our past sins have brought upon us, and when we calmly consider—if we can consider it calmly—what mischief is brewing within the Confederacy at the very moment when our armies are kindling with patriotic fervor, and standing like a wall of fire around her borders! The humiliation should be at home, not with the armies. They will bow themselves, to day, before God and ask forgiveness of sins, as men do, who are buckling on their harness for the struggle which may be their last, who are shriving themselves perhaps for the grave, but with them there will be no shame. Their vigils will be like those of the unspotted knight, who has fought and suffered, without fear and without reproach, for his country and his God! But with our humiliation shame must be largely mingled—shame, that we should be murmuring, at such a time as this, about money, and property, and meat, and drink, and clothing! Shame that we should be cavilling about points of questionable moment, when the enemy is raging upon our outer walls! Shame that we should be fomenting discontent, when all that is most precious to us is in peril! Shame that we should be stirring up contemptible jealousies, when independence and liberty are both at stake! It is true, that Nero fiddled while Rome was burning; that the Jews broke up into fierce factions and slaughtered one another within the walls of Jerusalem, while Titus was thundering without to bring the abomination of desolation into the Holy place; that petty court quarrels occupied the time of the degenerate Romans of the Western Empire while Alaric was sweeping over Italy and ravaging up to the very gates of the Eternal City! Are we about to imitate these wretched examples? Are we going to seize upon every pretext of

legislation, hasty and immature perhaps, but yet necessary, for making war against our own Government? Instead of remembering that in union and harmony is our only earthly strength, our only earthly hope, are we about to introduce into our conflict the folly of the Poles and conquer ourselves? It is the only mode in which we can be conquered, and woe to him who brings us to this condition! It were better for him that he had never been born! for living he will carry upon his brow the mark of unceasing infamy, and dying curses will be heaped upon his grave so long as a southron shall breathe to utter them!

All struggles for Liberty must pass through certain inevitable phases. History teaches us this lesson and a most useful one it is, because it prevents us from supposing that some new thing had happened to us. Such struggles always begin with a burst of enthusiasm which promises to sweep every thing before it. The whole insurgent people appears to be united and there seems to be but one heart and one soul. No sacrifice is too great to be made, no self denial too severe to be practiced! One single thought occupies the mind and that is the success of the struggle. But when it begins to be understood, that great results are not worked out by sudden bursts, but come to their consummation slowly and through trial, and when defeat follows upon victory, and death becomes frequent, and privation presents her stern visage, then ensues a period of corresponding depression, which tries the faith and principles of the people and leads many to regret that they had ever entered upon such a struggle, and to long once again for the ease and comfort of the past. It is then that such inconstant souls find out that they had never believed that the struggle would succeed, and that it was the birth of folly and of madness. Then it is, when the cause is a holy one such as this, that the Lord says of that people, as he said to Gideon, "The people that are with thee are too many for me to give the Midianites into their hands, lest Israel vaunt themselves against me saying, 'mine own hand hath saved me' Now therefore go to, proclaim in the ears of the people, saying, Whosoever is fearful and afraid, let him return and depart

early from Mt. Gilead. And there returned of the people twenty and two thousand." These are the first who give up the cause in heart and spirit, if not in act. Then comes on a period of mingled success and defeat, of alternate triumph and shame, when resources are failing and the comforts and even necessities of life are scarce and things look dark and unpropitious and ominous of a protracted war. These mischances are at once visited upon the Government, and then ensues, as the easiest mode of venting disappointment, an abuse of the administration, and a criticism of all that has been done, and unscrupulous charges of inefficiency and corruption, and safe assertions that things would have been far better, if a different policy had been pursued. There is nothing easier than to condemn the conduct of the past. But men forget, that in a Government like ours, where everything is governed by opinion, and the administration is checked by legislation, that nothing can be done until public opinion is prepared for it; that the people will not bear the action which may be best for them, until they shall have been brought to it by adversity or necessity. A system of taxation, for example, which may be welcomed at a moment of superabundant currency, would have given great dissatisfaction at an earlier period, nay might have done more injury to the cause than the evil which has followed from its neglect. A conscription, which will be submitted to cheerfully, when an enemy is advancing with emancipation in one hand and subjugation in the other, would have occasioned deep murmuring, if not resistance, at an earlier period of the struggle. A people like ours cannot be led on faster than their minds and feelings are prepared for the acts of the Government. The next step in the onward movement of the struggle arises out of the inevitable result of expenditures beyond the resources of the country, a superfluous currency, a rapidly depreciating value of paper money, with all the evil effects which flow from it, of high prices, of unsettled values, of hoarded provisions, of threatened want. And last of all follows that which closes the sequence, and which it is the hardest of all to meet and overcome, the disaffection which accumulates from these causes combined, and which

will, unless promptly and wisely handled, end in treason and civil war. When the mass of timid men, of men who never wanted the movement, of disappointed men, of men who desire to secure what they have acquired by the war, of men who long for peace to regain ease and comfort, increases to such an extent as to give them an apparent ability to face and defy the Government, then will come upon us the time to try our souls, when we shall find an enemy within worse than the enemy without. This is the phase of our struggle which we are now fast approaching. We have passed successfully through the previous trials of our movement. We have grappled with depression, and abuse of the administration, and criticism of our Generals, and financial derangement, and have come out of the conflict unharmed. We are now about to learn who are worthy to carry on this war; who are eager and earnest for the work of the Lord; the men who are ready to lap water with their mouths as a dog lappeth; the men who are to be set apart by themselves for battle and for history; the men who are to follow the chosen leaders of the people to final victory over Midian. God grant that enough may be found faithful to close the drama in triumph, and that I and mine may be among them! Should we meet this threatening danger in the proper spirit of patriots and disperse it through the good sense and devotion of the people, all will be well. We shall then have conquered all the difficulties of the struggle for liberty; for freedom's battle will never go down in blood and disaster, unless the blows which destroy her come from within and are basely struck by the hand of treachery. We shall then have proven ourselves worthy to be free and may safely leave the rest to God and the nations.

There is no surer manifestation of the weakness of principle which cleaves to man, than the easy and rapid road by which he travels to treason and infamy. It almost always begins in wounded vanity, or disappointed ambition, or thwarted interest. Personal feeling is at the bottom of it, and it has very little to do with genuine patriotism, or with a love of the cause which it uses to cover its own hate or envy. It assumes these for a cloak, but everybody of

any sagacity sees through the thin disguise. The real wish is to depreciate and make contemptible with the people the government, and specially the man who has the chief management of affairs. As the dislike of the Executive intensifies, it extends to the cause with which his name is associated. In wishing evil to him, evil is secretly wished to the cause, that so he may be mortified and humbled. But in the progress of events, the hate becomes ungovernable, and when inflamed by the hand of some skilful player, takes bolder steps, and begins to sneer at the cause itself, and to be ready to betray it, that in the downfall of the country, he may involve the individual against whom his heart is on fire. Most of the traitors of any mark to the cause of independence in our first Revolution, began their career with envy and hatred of Washington. Their first movement was to depreciate him; to lower him in the eyes of the people; to throw at him the darts of contempt and secret calumny. Conway, Wilkinson, Charles Lee, all began in the same way, and all traveled the like downward road of personal dislike, official envy, secret detraction, foul conspiracy, and although all did not go the length of Arnold, they all rendered themselves useless to the country, and were swept from action and from fame by the public opinion of the people. Depreciatory letters were written respecting him from General to General. Anonymous missives were sent to his private friends abusing him, and to Congress, insinuating that all the misfortunes of the country were owing to his weakness and incapacity. The noble patriot heeded these things only so far as they affected the interests of the cause over which he presided. He moved on, amid all these embarrassments, doing his duty calmly and quietly, noticing them only in a private letter to Mr. Laurens, then President of Congress, in these just and memorable words: "I was not unapprised that a malignant faction had been for some time forming to my prejudice; which, conscious as I am of having ever done all in my power to answer the important purposes of the trust reposed in me, could not but give me some pain on a personal account. But my chief concern

arises from an apprehension of the dangerous consequences which intestine dissensions may produce to the common cause."

"My enemies take an ungenerous advantage of me. They know the delicacy of my situation, and that motives of policy deprive me of the defence I might otherwise make against their insidious attacks. They know I cannot combat their insinuations, however injurious, without disclosing secrets which it is of the utmost moment to conceal. But why should I expect to be exempt from censure, the unfailing lot of an elevated station? * * * My heart tells me, that it has ever been my unremitting aim to do the best that circumstances would permit; yet I may have been very often mistaken in my judgment of the means, and may in many instances deserve the imputation of error." How history is ever repeating itself.

The only purpose which makes a struggle for independence worth the cost of blood and feeling which it always demands, is that it should bring out of its fermenting and convulsed elements an earnest people; a people worthy to live, because sensible of the great trusts and responsibilities which will rest upon it. To shed such blood, as we have spilled in this contest, for the mere name of independence, for the vanity or the pride of having a separate national existence, would be unjustifiable before God and man. We must have higher aims than these, and sublimer views, ere we can stand before the judgment seat of God with clean hands and clear consciences. And I think that we can confidently say, that we have in view objects entirely worthy of any struggle we may be summoned to pass through. We have been entrusted with the moral and religious education of an inferior race, made more sacred to us by the events of this war, because we have been made to see what will be their miserable fate should they pass out of our nurturing hands. We have been appointed to preserve upon this continent all that is valuable in morals and legislation and religion. We have been selected to be a bulwark against the worst developments of human nature, fanaticism, democracy, license,

atheism. For such purposes God is disciplining and refining us in the fires of affliction, and when he shall perceive that we have been ennobled by our struggle, purified by our sacrifices, exalted by our self-denial—that we have learned to put at their true value wealth, and luxury, and show—to distinguish between false pretension and genuine merit—to understand the infinite, absolute, immutable character of virtue—to worship the honest and the true, and the good, and the beautiful—to keep in our eye the religion of Jesus, as we find it revealed in the Scriptures and exemplified in his pure and holy and self-sacrificing life—He will give us our deliverance and establish us in this land flowing with milk and honey, as a nation consecrated for His own mysterious yet all-wise purposes.

To produce such a result, earnest, single-minded, self-sacrificing men are demanded; men who, when they are called to the battle, will not turn back from timidity, or fearfulness, or envy, or weariness; who, when the trumpet sounds to conflict, will not bow down upon their knees to drink, but will lap water as a dog lappeth, in their haste to press forward to their duty; who will follow in faith of God and of their leader, even though their numbers be reduced to a mere handful. Such men will God ever bless with his presence; by such men will God conquer, because they will never say, "Mine own hand hath saved me." "And the Lord said unto Gideon, By the three hundred men that lapped will I save you and deliver the Midianites into their hand." God giveth not alway the battle to the strong, but can save by many or by few. His blessing and his curse follow those who perform or neglect their duty when his honor and glory are concerned. "My heart is toward the Governors of Israel," said he by his Prophet "that offered themselves willingly among the people for the avenging of Israel." But to Meroz he said by his angel, "Curse ye Meroz, curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof, because they came not to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty." Let us, my hearers, offer ourselves willingly to the Lord, for indeed his honor and glory

are most deeply concerned. Our maddened adversaries are warring not only against us, but against God—warring against his arrangements, against his purposes, against his moral law, against his holy religion, “that thousand voiced Psalm,” as one has beautifully called it, “from the heart of Man to his invisible Father, the fountain of all goodness, beauty and truth, and revealed in every revelation of them,” but especially through Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour,

To whom be all honor and glory, for ever and ever.
Amen !



